

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	151037
Inspection date	17 December 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1986. She lives with her husband and three adult sons, in Chineham, a residential area on the outskirts of Basingstoke. Local amenities are within walking distance. The childminder uses the ground floor of the property for minding and children access the first floor for sleeping purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play and the family has one dog.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for three children on a part-time basis. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has excellent procedures and policies in place to record accidents, medication administered and for the treatment of emergency and medical advice. This means that parents are kept informed and their wishes are acknowledged and adhered to. The childminder is able

to provide appropriate treatment in the event of children having an accident, because she has undertaken relevant first aid training.

Through the excellent everyday practices adopted by the childminder, children are able to develop a very sound understanding of hygiene issues. Children have individual towels for hand drying, and understand the importance of washing hands after toileting, before meals, after playing outside and handling pets. Children are able to carry out these activities independently, and know how to use soap to wash their hands thoroughly.

Children enjoy an extensive range of healthy meals, which are provided by the childminder and the parents, including nutritious snacks and packed lunches. Meals consider individual children's needs and they are often involved in the choice and planning of snacks. These are served to children in a well organised social setting, where children develop an excellent range of social skills. For example, children sit at the table and excellent table manners are promoted. Drinks are freely available throughout the day.

Children are developing a very positive attitude towards exercise as they have daily access to a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. Activities and equipment at local parks and toddler groups support and encourage the children to develop a wide range of different physical and co-ordination skills. They enjoy going on nature walks with the family dog, running, jumping as they reap the benefits of the fresh air. The childminder has an excellent understanding about appropriate types of activities and levels of support for different ages and stages of children, giving them opportunities to play safely together. Children are becoming increasingly aware of the way activity affects their bodies and are encouraged to rest or take a drink.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded. The childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the different types and possible signs of abuse. She knows the procedure to be followed if she has a concern about a child, including contact details of social services and the police. There is a child protection policy in place, which informs parents of her role and responsibilities and this is discussed in detail with parents at their initial visit.

Exceptional safety precautions have been taken to minimise accidents. For example, smoke alarms are in place and regularly tested and recorded. There is a detailed emergency evacuation plan in place and this is regularly practised with all children, and the outcome recorded. To support this, the childminder uses soft toys to reassure the children during the fire drills, making them feel at ease. The children know what to do in an emergency as they learn to keep themselves safe. The childminder carries out a wide range of checks on the house to ensure the environment is safe for children and these are recorded in the detailed risk assessment. The risk of accidents outside the home is reduced, because the childminder is conscientious about ensuring children are safe whilst on outings. For example, all children are safely restrained in the car, as she is aware of changes to legislation. The childminder ensures children are supervised at all times.

All toys and equipment within the childminder's home are exceptionally well maintained; as she has a procedure and policy in place for ensuring toys are clean and suitable for use. She has developed children's understanding of how to care for toys through fun everyday activities, such as tidying activities away if areas are becoming cluttered and at the end of the day. Children

have an excellent understanding of how to create a safe environment, ensuring any broken or damaged toys are reported to the childminder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have formed very close and caring relationships with the childminder and each other. This helps to increase their sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self. During the settling in period she talks to the parents, and the children, to find out about children's needs, skills and interests. She builds on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. The childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child and as a consequence children make excellent progress.

Children readily explore the range of resources, which support their learning across all areas. The childminder is perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play. She uses questions and provides additional resources to challenge children's thinking. For example, by providing a child with a play mat so they can discuss what noises the animals make and talk about where they all live. Examples of children's work such as paintings and other art work show their ideas and efforts are all valued. Children feel a sense of achievement because the childminder routinely praises their efforts and helps them to discuss and agree turns which help them feel appreciated. For example, children gain confidence using numbers as they are encouraged to count everyday objects during their play.

Children are captivated by the extensive range of stimulating activities and are confident to try out new experiences such as growing plants. They have opportunities to explore musical instruments and enjoy singing, dancing and listening to music as they learn new songs. Children's imagination is developing very well. There are many opportunities for children to play as a group in role play activities. For example, they co-operate well when they pretend to cook lunch for each other, dressing up and playing with small world figures.

Children are achieving extremely well because the childminder knows them all and is skilled at interacting with them and extending the range of play resources. Children greatly enjoy their time with the childminder as she is enthusiastic and routinely joins in with their play. There is a flexible approach to routines and an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities which enable children to develop at their own pace. For example, children choose what they wish to play with along with taking part in some planned activities based around all areas of learning using topics such as Christmas. The childminder has a good understanding of the various learning outcomes that activities promote and uses observations of the children's progress to ensure activities are sufficiently challenging for individual children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides an extensive range of toys and resources, which reflects the diversity of society. Her positive approach to equality is reflected in her comprehensive equal opportunities policy. A range of fun and exciting activities encourage children to develop an understanding of all aspects of society and this enhances their learning about the world around them. She talks with children and explains to them how to value and respect differences, extending and developing children's understanding and respect for each child's individuality. Children show care, concern and respect for each other and talk about valuing differences during their daily routines and activities.

The childminder has a little experience of caring for children with disabilities, or learning difficulties. She has a very positive approach to this subject and an excellent understanding of how she would adapt her practice to be fully inclusive. She develops children's understanding of disabilities through the wide range of toys and resources, through discussions and debates, and through reading books together. Children's behaviour is exceptionally well managed in a calm, quiet manner. The childminder's house rules are simple and are aimed at the children's level of understanding, ensuring they know exactly what is expected of them. This develops the children's understanding of right and wrong and they are beginning to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Exemplary attention is given to promoting positive behaviour with all children.

Children benefit greatly from the very successful relationships that have been developed with parents. This ensures the childminder has an exceptional working knowledge and understanding of the needs of individual children. The childminder has also developed a comprehensive information folder for parents, which they can access at any time. Daily verbal and written information is shared very effectively and the childminder ensures parents are aware of all aspects of their child's care throughout the day, including their sleep routines, diet and the activities they have undertaken. She ensures at the initial visit parents have the opportunity to read and understand her policies and procedures. The childminder encourages parents to discuss these and to comment. This provides a firm basis for partnership working, which has a very positive impact on the care on the children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated and keen to increase her knowledge and good practice. The childminder has a clear understanding of the National Standards and ensures all household members are vetted, safeguarding the children in her home.

Children's care is enhanced through the effective organisation of space and resources. The childminder makes good use of the space to ensure all children have the opportunity to complete activities, play, relax or talk about their day. The children spend their time purposefully and the varied programmes of activities are planned to maximise play, development and learning opportunities. They are well supported, happy and settled in a warm caring environment where their individual needs are met extremely well. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is maintained to a high standard, up to date, and reviewed regularly. Comprehensive policies and procedures, children's records and parental contracts are shared with parents to keep them well informed about the service. These are stored confidentially and help to form a positive relationship with parents to promote children's care, learning and play.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that her first aid knowledge is updated. She was also asked to extend the range of resources which reflect positive images of people with differing abilities.

The childminder now holds a current first aid certificate which expires in 2010, helping to ensure the children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs on the premises. Children have access to a wide range of books and resources which reflect positive images of people with differing abilities. Children use play figures which have wheelchairs, look at pictures and enjoy listening to stories about other people, helping to develop their understanding of people's differences.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk